

Texas Representative Roberto R. Alonzo's



Capitol Report

***Removing Barriers to Higher Education for Undocumented Students****

According to a report by Zenen Jaimes Pérez published by the Center for American Progress (Friday, December 5, 2014), approximately 65,000 annually are denied access to a higher education for any number of reasons even though they have graduated high school. The CAP, an independent nonpartisan educational institute dedicated to improving the lives of Americans through progressive ideas and action, goes on to report that access to higher education for undocumented students is especially important because the pathways to legalization in immigration reform have been closely linked with education attainment, but undocumented students have to navigate a complex web of federal, state, and postsecondary institution policies in order to achieve a postsecondary education.

Each year, millions of students graduate from American high schools, but for the 65,000 undocumented students, the navigation process and attempts to gain entry into any institution of higher learning is far more difficult for the latter. Unlike for their classmates, this moment of achievement for undocumented graduates is muted by the facts that [their path to higher education remains difficult at best](#).

Also according to the report, undocumented students in all states are still prohibited from accessing all forms of federal education benefits that make up a large percentage of how students finance their postsecondary education. Besides tuition-equity laws, undocumented students face structural barriers to higher education, such as a lack of adequate mentoring, limited information on eligibility from postsecondary institutions, and a lack of continued financing for tuition and other living costs. The fact that they are too often locked out of colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education is a loss not only for them but for the country as well. This lack of access to higher education means that potential entrepreneurs, highly skilled workers, and middle-class consumers and taxpayers will not be there to grow our economy. So, it is up to policymakers to unblock the path to a brighter future for thousands of young, eager students and for the country as a whole. [[Read more and download the full report here.](#)]

[* Excerpts extracted in part from CAP report authored by Zenen Jaimes Pérez, Dec 5, 2014]



***84th Regular Session of Texas Legislature
Convenes, Tues, Jan 13, 2015; Ends Mon, June 1, 2015***



With the start of 84th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature just a couple of weeks away, and 2014 about to come to a close, I look forward to returning to Austin and start my ninth 2-year term as your State Representative for House District 104. With that in mind, and as I have always done in past sessions, be on the lookout in future editions of this **Capitol Report** as I profile and highlight some of the key legislation that we will be debating at the State Capitol. Accordingly, I am determined to stay firm and true to the same principles that have guided my service as your public servant for the last 16 years since I was first elected to the Legislature in November 1992.

I urge you to peruse this report and examine the issues it will highlight throughout the 140-day session, which convenes on Tuesday, January 13, and ends on Monday, June 1, 2015. In the meantime, if I or my staff can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us with your questions or concerns, either at my Dallas Office (214-942-7104) or my Austin Capitol Office (512-463-0408).

For more information concerning these topics or to schedule an appointment please call (512) 463-0408 or visit www.house.state.tx.us